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Establishing an ongoing relationship takes more than a birth

“I am writing on behalf of a friend who is living in the U.S. and would like for his 15 year old son to visit him. Problem is, his name is not on the boy’s birth certificate. Should he bring his son to apply for a visa, or have his name added to the birth certificate first”?

Each application for a visitor visa is treated separately, and the visa interview is always meant to make sure the applicant meets all the requirements for a visitor (B1/B2) visa to the United States. The Consular Officer will want to know that the applicant has clear travel plans, and that he or she can discuss them comfortably. This tells the officer that the purpose of the trip is legitimate. The Officer will also want to see that the applicant has strong ties to Jamaica which will cause a return when the visit is over. Another important piece is financial: who is paying for the trip, and is the trip affordable for the applicant? In the case of your friend’s situation, the Officer will want to establish that the relationship between father and son is real and ongoing. While having a name on the birth certificate is a plus, adding it late in the game will not ensure that a visa will be issued.

An ongoing relationship can be shown by such things as letters, e-mails, and phone calls exchanged, money transfers, and visits to Jamaica as evidenced by passport stamps. A marriage certificate (and a divorce decree, if applicable) can help establish a relationship between parents and their children. It is important to keep in mind that the interview paints a large picture, and if the Consular Officer is satisfied that good travel will result, a visa will be issued.